



HENRY FOSS
225 EAST F STREET
TACOMA, WASHINGTON

November 4, 1949

My dear Captain:

Enclosed is a newspaper article sent me by a friend for comment. I am sending it to you with these comments only because of what he says regarding being a Naval Reserve officer.

This is the first article I have ever seen of a Naval Reservist breaking into print and making such remarks, particularly including "many thousand Reservists". Regardless of our ideas of the recent Navy shake-up and controversial subjects discussed before the Congressional Committee, it appears to me that this man Ruark is just frothing at the mouth and dishing up something that is readable to make some money out of, and I don't think he speaks for any Naval Reserve officers in any shape or manner. Articles like this are not going to help the situation in the Navy or the country.

My reason for writing you is that I thought one of the finest gestures made by the Navy was in allowing Naval Reserve officers to attend the War College this year -- an honor which I appreciated very much. I believe I expressed myself to you in saying that I was more than pleased to be associated with the other reserve officers who came.

Somewhere, somehow, if this group could in any way help in Navy public relations, I am sure they would all be more than willing to do so. If you believe such an effort is practical and desirable, perhaps the group which was called together at the War College might form a "Committee to start such action or to disseminate such information as may be thought desirable".

I surely am not looking for any work. I have plenty to keep me going. I don't wish to get into any controversial matters, but articles of this character certainly make me mad. This entire discussion and controversy has been very interesting to me because of the number of discussions we had while in Newport.

Sincerely,

Capt. Henry Eccles
Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island

Navy 'Rat-Race' Bores Holes In Entire Country's Morale

By **ROBERT C. RUARK**

NEW YORK.—As a reformed naval officer, with considerable quiet pride in my old alma mater, I believe I speak for a great many thousand reservists when I say they'd have to handcuff me to get me back in the Navy in its present shape.

The United States Navy today is what we used to call a rat-race. Rat-races begin at the top, and the infection spreads downward until even the over-the-hill artists in the brig feel a sense of insecurity and futility. A rat-race is the antithesis of morale.

When Mr. Truman's newest political buddy-buddy, Francis Matthews, got his loyal chieftain to fire Adm. Louis Denfeld as chief of naval operations, that was the final wipe-off of morale in the Navy today.

From now on no top officer will trust Matthews to speak the Navy's piece in high council; from now on no top officer will attempt to cooperate with Matthews; from now on every attempt will be made to sabotage Matthews and reveal him unfavorably as Little Jack Horner, sucking a political plum, rather than as a symbolical Jack Tar.

THIS ATTITUDE of unrest and distrust plummets downward and fans out. The admirals are jittery and the captains become insecure; the commanders fidget and the lieutenants catch the irritation; the lieutenants chew out the ensigns and the ensigns give the chiefs a bad time and the chiefs eat out the ratings and

the ratings murder the recruits.

This goes on for a time, and then the reaction starts upward. The recruits goof off on their work and the ratings wink at the chiefs and the chiefs yawn at the ensigns and lieutenants and the commanders get off early to play golf and the captains and admirals are not inclined to give a rip one way or the other.

WHAT WAS ONCE a happy ship, taut and sharp with shared pride based on security, discipline and performance, suddenly goes sloppy and lax. The men sprawl in their sacks after reveille; the officers quit shaving; the old man begins to pull on the bottle in his cabin; the food gets lousy and the cook doesn't give a damn; the gear is loose and the brass goes green and the lines sprawl on the deck and nobody cares.

To further define a rat-race, it is largely born when the boss-men in the topmost rigging have small concept of what goes on, but swing their weight mightily

to enforce their decisions. A rat-race is inspired by blind favoritism and cynical discrimination.

I WOULD SAY you are looking at a superb rat-race in this Washington thing, especially from the Navy's standpoint. The entire rattle between the fighting services is a rat-race. I would also say that a great many aspects of the Truman administration could qualify in any sweepstakes between rats.

The poison of the rat-race spreads even outside its focal point. In the case, say, of the lowly taxpayer, his confidence in his Navy, in his President, in his President's cabinet, is shaken suddenly and he views further decisions with a cold and fishy eye.

HIS CONFIDENCE in his country's ability to administer and defend itself is impaired, as he watches the bickerings and double-crosses and listens to charges and counter-charges which prove nothing. He has re-

garded the atom bomb and the B-36 as the Frenchman regarded the Maginot Line; now he begins to wonder if, perhaps, he was not overtrusting when he placed his faith in what his leaders told him.



ROBERT C. RUARK